

02/18/2023

RE: H.B.5653

Ammunition Tax Hearing Wednesday February 22, 2023

To the honorable members of the State of Connecticut Finance, Revenue and Bonding Commission:  
Senator Marilyn Moore – Chair, Representative Dorinda Borer – Chair, Senator Tony Hwang – Ranking Member,  
Representative John Piscopo – Ranking Member, and others.

Please consider my following testimony regarding the impending additional Connecticut tax on firearms and ammunition (H.B.5653).

Firearms and ammunition are already subject to a 11% excise tax per the Pittman-Robertson Act. This excise tax is set by law at 11% of the wholesale price for long guns and ammunition and 10% for handguns. It is paid by manufacturers, producers, and importers and applies to all commercial sales and imports, whether their purpose is hunting, sport shooting, or personal defense. The imposition of additional taxes on any of these items places an unfair economic burden on the thousands of responsible gun owning, tax paying state citizens that abide by Connecticut's firearm regulations and hold the concept of public safety and the judicious use of these weapons in sincere regard.

I oppose the passing of this proposed legislation, but should this bill be passed the intended allocation of the funds needs further debate. The overwhelming majority of licensed (CCP permit, Long Gun Permit), ergo legal gun owners, in our state do not need further education regarding the use and handling of their firearms. To be allowed to legally possess a weapon in Connecticut entails a rigorous vetting process and is becoming more and more difficult to pass. The money spent on taxes could be used by the targeted individuals for food, gas, clothing, housing or for further personal firearms training.

In my estimation the levy of an additional tax is tantamount to penalizing law abiding gun owners for the actions of a recidivist criminal element. But if passed additional monies accrued via this bill should be applied to:

1. Enforcement of current statutes regarding firearms.
2. Mitigating the epidemic of illegal weapons from our towns, cities, and urban neighborhoods via a combined effort of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.
3. Ensuring that those who would apply for any firearm permit do not have a history of mental illness or have been known to have exhibited any socially threatening behaviors.

Thank you for allowing me to have a voice in this process.

Respectfully,

Gary Hull